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THE  
SENSE<sup>30</sup>  
OF THE  
PEOPLE  
OF  
GREAT-BRITAIN  
Concerning the Present  
STATE of AFFAIRS.  
WITH  
Remarks upon some Passages  
of our *Own* and the *Roman*  
History.

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In a LETTER to a Member of Parliament:

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*Si esset in iis fides, in quibus summa esse debebat, non laboraremus.*

Cic. 3. Epist.

*Cum Pecuniam Publicam averterit, num fraude poterit evadere  
Peculatus?*

Id. in Ant.

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Wymiarowa redakcja na Karty i karty

WILSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE, 1870. - A woman, wife of a

of health and well-being. This is a critical issue for the future of our country.



# P R E F A C E

Am commission'd by the Author of the following Sheet, to acquaint the Reader that the first Part of them was writ in Haste, before the late Recells, at the Request of a Gentleman in the Country; who, observing the great Uneasiness the People were in there, desir'd he would let him know What the Sense of the Town was; and that, in their own Language, as near as he could. How far his Command is comply'd with, I leave him to judge. The Historical Relations that follow, tho' now joined to the former, were begun with a very different View; and if he finds some of 'em too prolix, he may be assur'd the Author, (who is now at a Distance) did so too; and had he had more Time, they would have been shorter. There is one Thing more I am to tell him, and that is, that he is oblig'd to another for some Things in the latter Part; which, he hopes, will not be lik'd the worse for coming from a Greater Man than himself. And now my Orders are obey'd. But since I have taken Pen in Hand, I think I'll try my Talent too; and as my Friend has told him in the following Papers, how the great Men among the Romans acted in Relation to their Country, I'll shew him how the best and wisest of 'em used to talk upon the same Head.

“ When you have look'd over all the Ties in Nature, you will find nothing dearer, says Cicero, no Obligation of greater Importance, than that by which we are every one of us ty'd to the Commonwealth. Our Parents, Children, Friends, are all dear to us; but our single Country is more than all the rest; and even

## P R E F A C E.

"ry honest Man is ready to lay down his Life for the Advantage of  
"that sacred Interest. How execrable then is the barbarous Impie-  
"ty of those Men, who have torn their Country to Pieces by all  
"sorts of Villainy, and who not only have been, but are at this In-  
"stant conspiring its Ruin and Destruction?

"It is the Duty (says another of their great Men) and should be  
"the principal Care of those that have the Administration of Pub-  
"lick Affairs, to see that every individual be protected in his Pro-  
"perty, and that the Poor and Simple may not be circumvented by  
"the little Arts of cunning Men, or oppressed by the Power of great  
"Ones: In short, that private Men may not be dispossess of their  
"Rights and Estates, under the Pretext of a publick Good. And  
"if to make my own Fortune (continues he) by the impoverishing  
"another, is declared unlawful, not only by the Dictate of Nature,  
"and the Rights of Nations, but by the particular Laws and  
"Constitutions of all States; How detestable must those Governors  
"be, who abusing that Confidence the plain and honest Part of Man-  
"kind, who are always Minors, repose in them, as their Trustees  
"and Guardians, draw them by plausible Appearances, into their  
"Net, and so enrich themselves at the Expence of their Country.

"Plato's Rule, says the abovemention'd Orator, ought to be ob-  
"served by all that are entrusted with the Administration of the  
"Publick. It was this; that they should in such sort assent and  
"defend the Publick Interest, that all their Actions should refer to  
"that without any Regard to their own private Advantage.  
"Therefore, above all Things, let such keep themselves clear from  
"the least Suspicion of Avarice. It's not only a mean Thing, but  
"an Impious, to make a Prey of the Commonwealth. This is a  
"copious Subject, but I shall confine my self, only hinting at a Law  
"of this brave People, which I would recommend to the Considera-  
"tion of my Countrymen, and it being made by the Wisdom of the  
"Nation, that is by the Senate, will shew at once, the Sense of the  
"Nation, with Respect to the Conduct of Persons in the Admini-  
"stration. *Donum ne cipiunto, néve danto, néve peten-  
dā, néve gerendā, néve gestā potestate.*



THE

THE  
SENSE  
OF THE  
PEOPLE.

Concerning the  
Present STATE of Affairs.

SIR,

IT's entirely in Obedience to your Request, that I send you this long Letter; which is nothing else but a plain and natural Account of the People's Relentment of their common Injuries and Misfortunes; or, to put it in your Terms, THE SENSE OF THE PEOPLE, as far as my Memory will serve me, in their own Words. The Authors of their Grievances are at last become intolerable to 'em; and Vengeance, however unprofitable, as they are told, is one chief End, which they propose, as their future Security. Whoever thinks fit to withdraw or excuse himself from the Share he ought to bear in this Design, is suspected to be engaged in a Confederacy, which he is ashamed to avow: This Suspicion is so far from being just of you, that I could wish you would come and vindicate your Character to the Publick, which was never so miserably necessitous of all honest Help as at present.

As I am now upon the Decline of a publick Life, I have had an Opportunity of observing a great deal of the Variety and Inconstancy of publick Affairs; but I never yet

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knew so great a Ferment, so prevailing a Dissatisfaction, as at present we see throughout the whole Kingdom. Parties have been preferred, discarded, restored, mix'd, and the several Friends of each, have by turns complain'd of Reciprocal Violence and Injury, Mismanagement and Corruption; but I don't know that any of them have ever persuaded the whole Body of the People into their Quarrel. No private little Wrongs cou'd have effected a Discontent so universal. That Administration must affect every one, which every one complains of. Indeed, when a Nation is plundered and oppressed, they can't but feel and resent it.

They imagine now, that at the Opening of this Session, there was a Design carry'd on by some, whom they will needs have to be very ill Men, to secure, even in some Degree, the very late Directors; but we (say they) were not time enough to admit or endure such an Attempt; so that they were forced to drop the Design, and join (at least) in the Cry against 'em, tho' they trembled at the Apprehension of every Fact that should be discovered. They could have been glad to have stood by their old Friends; but since that must not be, the next Trial was to compound for their own Security, by the Sacrifice of their Allies. But this Artifice is not satisfactory; the People tell you that the best and likeliest Means to come to the Bottom of their Misfortunes, is to begin at the Top. It is of very little value to them how the lesser Cheats are disposed of; They were so by Profession, and have acted intirely in Character. If DANIEL had been devoured in the Den, it is presumed that no Body could have thought hardly of the Lyons: No, no, the Authors of the Villainy are the Criminals; it's those that deliberately form'd the Mischief, and that hired and retained their little Creatures to execute it, who chiefly deserve the Enquiry of a Parliament.

How comes it to pass, say they, while lesser Villains, are punished every Day, that those who have pillaged the whole Country, shall escape? The greatest Subjects of the *British* Crown, did not use to be too great to be accountable to a British Parliament. 'Tis in vain for me, or any one to answer to this. But you would not condemn any one without sufficient Evidence; They can all immediately reply, that they can point to Instances, and those modern ones too,

where

where Resolutions have been taken, Censures founded, and other Persons been condemn'd, and all this very justly, upon the same or less Evidence. But suppose, (not grant) the Evidence defective; in Courts of Justice it often happens that where there is not legal Proof enough to convict a Cheat, yet there is sufficient to satisfy any one present, that it would be Folly to trust him any more. A suspected Minister ought to be used as CÆSAR did his Wife, he did not expect Demonstration. Reasonable Grounds of Suspicion are enough in both Cases, there being seldom above Two privy to the Fact in either. If one tells 'em, 'tis prudence to wink at some Things, otherwise the whole may be thrown into Confusion, and then where are our Estates? The Answer is, that when such a Confusion is introduced, our Estates may indeed possibly be lost; but by the Toleration of the late Iniquity, and thereby the Encouragement of all future Villainies, by the Increase of Debts, the Decay of Trade, the Destruction of Manufactures, the Ruin of Credit, the Mismanagement of the Revenue, the Loss of Money to other Kingdoms, or the locking it up at Home, and all this while, the Continuation of Taxes; by these, say they, Confusion is actually introduced, and our Estates are already lost.

To other Day I happened to be in a Company, where, to my great Surprize, I heard a Gentleman endeavouring to moderate the publick Displeasure. He told us, that as he sincerely lamented the Ruin of his Country, he was impatient for Redress, and hoped to see it made for ever unsafe for any one to play the same Game over again; but he ventured to add, that by going too fast, or changing Hands too soon, we ran a Risque (at least) of altering for the worse: That as we had at present a Possibility of extricating our selves from our Misfortunes, by length of Time and careful Management, we shou'd take the surest Course and not commit our selves to the Administration of a Party, who, as they secretly rejoic'd at our Miseries, will not fail to improve 'em to their own Advantage; whose Principles have often endanger'd the Liberties of these Kingdoms, and have entail'd Slavery on the greatest Part of EUROPE.

But the whole Company, not enduring the Declamation, cry'd out, What then is WHIGGISM supported by Rapine and Injustice? If that be the Case; if the Two Parties have chang'd

chang'd their Ground ; if those formerly reckon'd Anti-Courtiers are turn'd fawning, obsequious Dependents ; in God's Name let 'em fall. WHIGGISM carries in it the very Notion of Liberty, and Love to our Country ; and then it follows, that the Punishment of Publick Horse-Leeches Parricides, must be the only Way to settle WHIGGISM, and to lay a Foundation for the Happiness of future Times.

In short, these are Pretences to Screen some favourite Offenders ; but when Things are come to Extremity, you can Hoodwink us no longer. And we know very well says one, what good Use was made of this Pretence, by the Event of a late Examinitation ; so shallow, or so corrupt are Englishmen grown. But give me the Man, Tros Rutilus-ve, WHIG or TORY, that prefers the true Interest of ENGLAND to that of any other Country, or People whatever ; that encourages Trade, and studies to administer the Treasure of the People thrifitly and prudently.

Such, Sir, is the Sense of the People ; and if I give it you in their own Words, it is because it was your Desire I shou'd do so, that you might the better judge at what they drive.

I perceive it is Matter of great Admiracion to some, the extraordinary Address that has been shewn in the secret Management of this Affair. That the whole Transaction of 574 500 l. fictitious Stock shou'd only be with the Privacy of one single Man, that in case of Danger All might be stifted by his withdrawing, and all other Proof neglected and disengaged by the Name of Hearsay Evidence ; tho' by the by, some will have it that Letters and Notes under one's own Hand are more than Hearsay Evidence ; and that the Practises of burning, blotting, razing, and interpolating, have been thought so much more than Presumption, that they have, upon less Occasion, been admitted as a tolerable Degree of Proof in a certain Place.

But what I wou'd infer, says another, from KNIGHT's Withdrawning, is the premeditated Villainy of the Whole. The Actors, whoever they were, had indeed prodigious Fore-sight, by the Caution taken to prevent Discovery ; they foresaw their Guilt, the Success of it, the Turn of Affairs, the Universal Calamity, and consequently their own Safety in the Secrecy of one : Had there been more, some might

might have squeak'd, or at least not all of 'em escap'd; or if they had, it wou'd have had a worse Aspect than at present. In fine, they foresaw this very Examination; but the want of Judgment, as I hope at least, appeared in believing they had provided sufficiently against it, and imagining they were to be at Ease in the Affluence of Princely Fortunes, amidst the Misery of their Fellow-Subjects.

Some People have observed, that the Execution of the late pernicious Scheme, was scarcely attended with more Villainy, than Madness and Folly; *Furor rapiendi ac predandi occacavit oculos.* The monstrous Avarice of our Plunderers, has undone themselves as well as the Nation: Each of the Thirty little Cheats might have got their ~~100000~~. a piece, and a few others have doubled that Sum, without running any Risque; nay, perhaps have received Thanks for their great Care of Publick Credit. So mean, fawning, obsequious, as well as indolent and corrupt are we grown, that nothing but the prodigious Enormity of the Guilt, 'the Universality of our Misery, has forc'd us into the Enquiry we are now making.

As to the Event and Success of this Enquiry; I shall not be disappointed (says another) if nothing comes of it. The Nature of the Task is attended with so many Difficulties, and the Discouragements the Enquirers meet with from other Quarters so great, that they have need of more than ordinary Constancy and Resolution to persist in the Discharge of so uneasy a Trust: However, they have the Satisfaction to know, that the whole Weight of the Nation is on their Side; that they have the Blessings of all honest Men at present, and shall be ever mentioned with Honour, in the Annals of their Country.

Yes, says one that stood by, their Country can never do them too much Honour, while they continue to have the same Regard for it they have hitherto shewn: And as for what some People insinuate, it is done with an

ill Design; that they will grow cool, and their Courage abate from the many Difficulties they meet with, and so prove like the Dog of *Antwerp*, who had us'd a long while to carry home his Master's Meat from the Market with great Integrity. At last being harder beset by some more resolute Currs than ordinary, when he found he cou'd defend it no longer, he fell on himself: *Since it's to no Purpose to hold out, says he, I had as good have my Share.*

For my part, says one that had been listning to this Discourse, I am apt to think Matters might have been carry'd, long ago, with more Ease, if some of another *List* had been employ'd: As now the Enquiry is prosecuted with an Air of Busines and Concern, it might then have look'd like an Affair of Pleasantry and Amusement, and been receiv'd and supported with a tolerable Degree of good Humour; but we see what wou'd be the Consequence of frequent Ballots.

The Conversation is still the same, wherever you go. I must own, I heartily wish that they whole Businels it is, wou'd put a Stop to it; which is only to be done, as far as I can guess, by giving up Offenders, be they who they will: Some will have it that Matters were manag'd wrong at first: They ought to have been secur'd immediately. If one shou'd reply, *Wou'd you have condemn'd and punish'd 'em before you heard 'em?* No, say they, they were sufficiently heard (unless you'll quibble upon the Word) when the Books were first produc'd, which in an Hour's Perusal discover'd Villainy enough to have justify'd their Confinement; and then we had not been sending to *Vienna*, *Brussels*, &c. then we had at least hid our Shame, and not been refus'd this little Fellow; than which I think, nothing shews our Misery more.

The Contempt which our good Friends and Allies have for us, is evident from the little Art they use to hide it: And their refusing to deliver him up under the Pretence of some Privileges of the High and Mighty States

States of *Brabant*, can't methinks, but raise Indignation in every *English* Breast. We are poor, and it seems our Allies know it, and therefore despise us. But let them beware how they rouse the Lyon; other Answers have formerly been return'd to the Crown of *England*: And tho' a *British* House of Commons may and will always hear Reason, they will not suffer themselves to be trifled with, whoever else may.

As for me, (cries another) I am so fully persuaded of the Emperor's Justice and Gratitude, that nothing will be wanting on his Part, I am sure, to deliver up a Man, who, as he was last Year made a Tool for the Destruction of the Nation, may now be the Instrument of satisfying it: And his Imperial Majesty, I think, can't but have Interest and Authority enough with his own Subjects, to gain so small a Point; who, 'tis well known, tho' he is as just and mild a Prince as any upon Earth, yet has formerly shewn those very Subjects, that he knows how to assert his Prerogative, and punish all their Pretences to Right, which contradict his just Will and Pleasure.

We the rather expect to see Mr. *Knight* in *England*, (as others say) not so much, because 'tis such a Trifle to the Emperor to grant, and at the same time so valuable a Favour to us; but that we are inform'd, that his coming over is earnestly desir'd, even by those who can't but have Weight in what they ask of that Prince; and who seem concern'd in the Discoveries which he is expected to make, as the only Way to clear up their Innocence, and wipe away the Suspicion which has been most unjustly thrown upon their Characters. If these People are in Earnest, they are very happy in having an Opportunity of pressing this Matter more successfully than others can. We own, (say they) we shou'd be glad to see *Knight*; were it only to be satisfy'd, that such a Parcel of Stock was honestly paid for; such a Name and Letter was forg'd; such a mysterious Translation, such a blind Accomplice was clearly upon another.

Score than is generally suppos'd, and had no Relation at all to *South Sea*.

This Discourse was follow'd by a needless Calculation of the Length of Time, in which we might hope to see *Knight*, if he was sent over at all. *As the nearest Way to Vienna has been lately found out to be by Brussels, so for ought we know, the nearest Way from Brussels may hereafter be thought to be by Vienna.* And though Gentlemen shou'd be perswaded to attend the Service of their Country till he comes, to the Detriment of their own private Affairs; whether other Persons will think proper to desire or impose such a Hardship upon 'em, we can't determine.

However, continued they, 'tis certain there was a shorter Way of going to work at first, which is not yet altogether too late to try. The old Parliamentary Method was to represent their Grievances, and get them Redress'd as soon as they met, before they wou'd go upon any other Considerations whatever. It was not for want of Grievances (some tell us) whatever else might be wanting, that this Method was not us'd at first. If this Way of Proceeding had been taken, *Knight* cou'd hardly have withdrawn, or perhaps it might have been convenient to have had him here again e'er this, to have avoided the Explication of many other Complaints of a different Nature, that might have been set on Foot; but whether that Point had been gained, several other valuable Advantages wou'd have been secur'd.

There is a remarkable Proof of this Right of Parliament, in *Richard the IIId's* Time, and Things of this Sort, are never the worse for being old. \* Some undeserved Favours, *says my Author*, shewn to a Minion, the Exorbitances of great Officers, and other Publick Miscarriages as to the Revenues, had made no small Impressions on the minds of many of the Lords, as well as Commons, when *Richard* call'd a Parliament. They soon after they were assembled, joined in this Message to him (*Henry Knighton's Words*, who lived

at

at the very time, are these) That the Chancellor and Treasurer ought to be removed from their Offices, because they were not for the good of the King and Kingdom; and because also they had such Matters to treat of with one of them, as could not be treated of, while he remained in that Office.

The King, who no doubt, thought this a very bold Way of proceeding in his Subjects assured 'em, He would not remove his meanest Scullion Boy at their Instance, and advised 'em to hasten the Busines of Parliament; by which is meant the Supply of his Expences for his Wars, Household and other Charges. But the Lords and Commons, by joint Consent, reply'd, That they neither could, nor would dispatch the least Article, till he (who, as the Historian says, was then lingering at Eltham) would come to 'em, and remove Michael de Pole, the Chancellor, from his Office.

The King's Answer to this, not pleasing them, The Parliament sent him this Message. Sir, The Prelates, Lords, and whole People of the Commons of England, after several loyal and honest Wishes, intimate these Things unto you, that they have it confirmed by ancient Constitution, which none can contradict, that the King ought to call a Parliament once a Year, as the highest Court of the Realm, wherein Equity ought to shine bright, where, as well poor as rich, ought to find Refreshment, by removing all kind of Abuses, where publick Grievances are to be redres'd, and with the most prudent Counsel, the State of the Nation is to be treated of, that the King's and Nation's Enemies at Home, as well as Abroad, may be discovered and punished, and the necessary Burdens of the King and Kingdom may with most Ease (the Publick Want considered) be supply'd. And they conceive also that since they are to support the publick Charge, they should have the ordering and supervisal too, how and by whom their Goods and Fortunes are expended.

What follows in this Remonstrance is still freer; to which

which the King making a threatning Answer, the Lords and Commons, after giving him some seasonable Advice, relating to his Threats, proceed in these Words.

*The People of England have in your Time sustained so many Taxes for the Support of your Wars, as that now they are reduced to such incredible Poverty, that they can neither pay their Rents, nor assist their King, nor even afford themselves the Necessaries of Life: And all this is brought to pass by the evil Ministers of the King, who have ill-governed both King and Kingdom to this Day: And unless we do quickly set our helping Hands to the Work, and raise the healing Prop. the Kingdoms of England will, in less Time than we think of, be miserably subverted.*

But there is yet one Part of our Message on the behalf of your People to be imparted to you, That we have an ancient Constitution (not many Ages since experimented;) it grieves us to mention it: That if the King thro' any evil Counsel whatever, or through a weak Obstinacy, or Contempt of his People, shall alienate himself from them, and refuse to govern by the Laws and Statutes of the Realm; if he shall throw himself headlong into wild Designs, and stubbornly execute his own singular arbitrary Will, ----- Then follows the Right of the People, dreadfully asserted. But they afterwards go on.

*That this Kingdom may not by your evil Counsellors be subverted; This Kingdom so honourable, and above all the Nations in the World, most famous in War, may not now in your Time, through the Distractions of ill Government, be miserably laid waste; That the Title and Inscription of these Miseries, may never be placed as a scandalous Mark upon your Reign, and this unhappy Age: Recall, we beseech you, your Royal Mind from such foolish and pernicious Counsels; and whosoever they are that suggest such Matters to you, do not only not hearken to 'em, but totally remove them from you; for in a Time of Danger it will be found they can no ways effectually serve you.*

The Reason and Honesty of this wrought so much upon

on the King, that in Three Days Time he came to his Parliament, though with some Reluctance; when *Michael de Pole* was impeach'd of High Crimes and Misdemeanors, and turned out of his Office, and another put in his Place by Consent of Parliament, as was likewise the Treasurer, another Favourite.

But it ought to be remembered for the Instruction of these Times, that upon the King's desiring a Supply at the same time, that he seem'd to hesitate at the discarding *Pole*, the Commons answered, *That he did not need the Tallage of his Subjects, who might so easily furnish himself of so great a Sum of Money from him that was his Debtor, as the Articles of Impeachment set forth.*

As for *Robert de Vere* Duke of *Ireland*, the King's most dangerous Favourite, the Parliament, to shew their Prudence and Moderation, chose rather to give him a vast Sum of Money, upon Condition that he would go to *Ireland*, than to endure the Influence of his Counsels near the King's Person. But after all this, the good Commons had no sooner gained their Points, than they freely gave the King a Supply.

Before they broke up (continues my Author) the Parliament observing, by the Covetousness of the King's Ministers, that the Publick Revenue was vainly lavish'd, the King insufferably abus'd, (partly thro' Negligence to search out the Truth, partly thro' a resolute Humour to support those beyond Reason, whom he had once advanced) that the common People, by continual and grievous Burthens, were miserably impoverish'd; the Rents of the Great Men much impaired, and their poor Tenants in many Places, forc'd to abandon their Husbandry, and leave their Farms empty and desolate; and that by all this the King's Officers alone became immeasurably rich: They therefore chose a Number of considerable Men to inspect, treat of, and determine all Affairs, Causes and Complaints arising, from the Death of *Edward the Third*, to that Time; as likewise of the King's Expences and his Ministers, and all other Grievances happening within that Time.

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The Historian farther observes, That when the Parliament endeavour'd at an *Act of Resumption*, the just and frequent Way to repair the languishing Condition of the Nation, *M. de Pole* told the King, it was to the King's Dishonour, *ad dedecus Regis*, and forc'd him from it; to which the Commons answer'd, ' Altho' they were wearied out by Toils and Expences, they wou'd never grant the King a Subsidy, until by Authority of Parliament he shou'd actually resume all that belong'd to the Crown of *England*. And that it was more to the Dishonour of the King to leave so many of his poor Subjects in intollerable Want. Yet cou'd not all good Council work, till by Parliament that Great bad Man was banish'd; which was no sooner done, but an *Act of Resumption* follow'd; so true it is, and it ought to be a perpetual Lesson to Posterity, *That whenever the People of England desire to redress Grievances, and recover what they have been Plunder'd of; The Work must begin with the Impeachment of Corrupt Ministers. The Weight of a Parliament will ever bear down a bad Man, how great soever.*

It's certain, a King, who wou'd Reform the State for the general Ease and Benefit of his People, must expect to meet with some Difficulties, especially if those nearest him, and who have his Ear, are Partakers in the Abuses he wou'd correct: All sort of Rubs will be laid in the Way, and the Fears of such as may be call'd to an Account, will make 'em set all kind of Engines at work. They who are conscious of their Guilt, and apprehensive, that the Justice of the Nation shou'd take Notice of their Thefts and Rapines, will try to give all Things a false Turn, and fill every Place with their Suggestions; they'll accuse innocent or less guilty Persons, that so by putting the People upon a wrong Scent, they may avoid the Pursuers, and escape unpunish'd.

Sometimes they will spirit the Chief, if not the only, Evidence, away: At other Times they will endeavour to blast the Reputation of such as wou'd enquire into

their

their Actions. And tho' perhaps there are no other possible Ways left to supply the State, but by making them disgorge, and bringing 'em to a Restitution, yet they will pretend that all Motions leading thereto, and all Enquiries of this Nature are nothing but Spight, the Effects of Discontent, and the Result of Faction. And that the full Knowledge of their Crimes may never reach the Prince's Ear, they endeavour to engross him to themselves, by misrepresenting all that are not of their Cabal, as disaffected to his Person and Government. They'll find out false Colours for their Proceedings, and cover their Corruption and Rapine with the Presence of their Master's Service; nay rather than fail, they'll throw the Odium of the Whole upon him.

By these false Suggestions, well-meaning Persons have often been frighten'd from reaching at great Offenders: And even the best Patriots, by seeing with what Warmth and Zeal Corruptions are defended, have been wearied into Silence; and this has made some of our Kings believe, That either the Offenders were got above the Laws, or that the People consented to those Things they did not think fit to punish. But wise Princes see thro' all this. They know that an honest Minister will be content with moderate Gains; and that no Merit can give a Man a Title to Rob the Publick: That a few may complain without Reason; but that there is Occasion for Redress when the Cry is Universal.

They see thro' all the little Artifices, and can't but be sensible, whatever Colours they may give to their Villainy, that Mankind must abhor to behold a few enrich'd with the Spoils of a whole Country.

and to see private Persons securing to themselves, in spight of Parliament, a vast ill-gotten Wealth in the Poverty of the Publick ; and therefore they'll be the first to desire every Thing shou'd be look'd into, and all possible Thrift set on Foot that may ease the People : They'll make Choice of such Ministers as are likeliest to handle the Nation's Money with the cleanest Hands : They'll propose with Pleasure, themselves, that those Evils may be corrected, which a few have committed at the Expence of the Whole Kingdom ; that the Thefts upon the Publick be look'd into and punish'd. They won't stay to be ask'd, that those Servants may be call'd to an Account who have broken their Trust, and in their Offices consented to the Plunder of the Nation, tho' they shou'd have had no Share in it themselves, knowling that our Laws put little Difference between a Minister that contracts actual Guilt himself, and him who permits others to commit a Crime, which by the Authority of his Office he might have prevent-ed.

And indeed the Reason is plain, for it is the Interest of Princes, when they come to understand the true State of Things, so to do. They can't be unwilling to prevent their own Ruin ; and such abuses : And their Faction, who have been guilty of Male-Administration, will be found very weak, when he is once in Earnest to have what has been amiss amended, because but a few are Gainers by Misgovernment, and a Multitude are injur'd by it.

'Tis true, Plunderers have now and then out-braved the Laws and escaped, when in their Depredations upon the Publick, there have been a great many concern'd, and they became safe by the Multitude

tude of those who have been Partakers in the Booty; and yet there are Examples in former Reigns, where the true Lovers of our Constitution have courageously attacked and brought to Condemnation Men in the highest Posts of Authority, and those fortified by the Multitude of the Persons concerned in the Plunder; and shall not the Popular *Hue and Cry* which so hotly pursues the Robbers at this time, the Wants of the Nation calling so loud for Vengeance, the universal Voice of the People, crying *Refund, Refund*, awaken some honest Patriots, some brave Spirits, to insist upon the most rigorous Punishment of a few; I say a very few Miscreants (would I cou'd call their Booty small too) given up by the whole Body of the Kingdom, and detested by all Mankind, but their Associates?

And how is this great and honest Design likely to be better executed, than by imitating the Parliament of *Richard* the II<sup>d</sup>, (tho' perhaps it had been as proper sooner) in asserting the immediate Necessity of redressing Grievances, and rejecting every other Consideration, 'till that is done; which is not only the ancient Constitution of this Government, but the most probable Way to come at Offenders, when timely taken, by shewing a proper Resolution in their Prosecution, and by that Means giving them no Opportunity to concert Measures with the Accomplices in their Crimes, or to withdraw themselves or their Effects from Justice.

Whether or no *Richard's* Parliament did prudently in giving so great a Power to a select Number of Men, after they were dismiss'd, I shall not decide; but they certainly took one Method not only wise but Parliamentary; I mean, that they themselves, during

during their Session, went into a Committee of the whole House, *To consider of the State of the Nation*; and this plainly gained 'em their Point. This is always the great Day of a Parliament, and valuable to *Englishmen*: Then the Subject feels his Strength, and vindicates his Liberties. And whether the Representatives of the People assembled at this Day in *Parliament*, (than which I am sure there never was any that better understood their Duty to their King and Country,) will follow the same Method, Time will shew.

This was the Way the *Parliament* took in the Reign of *Edward the IIId*, when they wanted to get rid of a most pernicious Favourite, *Pierce Gaveston*, a *Frenchman*; who had so possess'd the King, that he entirely neglected the Counsels of his Nobles, and the Affairs of State. In his first *Parliament*, they unanimously besought the King to advise and treat with his Nobles concerning the *State of the Kingdom*; and at the same Time falling themselves into a very strict Examination of Affairs on their Part; they urged the Matter with such good Success, that the King consented that they should reduce into Articles, all that was necessary for the Good of the Nation, and took an Oath to ratify all their Resolutions. Amongst these Articles, after requiring the Observation and Execution of *Magna Charta*, with all other necessary Ordinances; They insist that, *All Strangers should be banished the Court and Kingdom*; and *all ill Counsellors removed*; That the King shou'd not begin any War, or go any where Out of the Kingdom, without the Common Council of his People. *Walsingham* says upon this Head, p. 99, That the Barons *librato utroque periculo, inveniunt,*

*unt, quod vivente Petro, esse non poterat Pax in Regno, nec Rex abundare Thesauro: So they never rest-ed till he was banish'd the Kingdom.*

It seems likewise, that in this Reign the Ladies were begging and intreiguing at Court : For the Lady *Vesey* was accus'd of having procur'd to Sir *Henry Beaumont*, her Brother, (and others, several Lands, Rents, Tenements, Franchises, and Offices, by which means the Kingdom came to be loaded with Taxes and Impositions; for which she was ordered to leave the Court, without ever returning to make any Stay there.

The very Talk only of such an *Enquiry into the State of the Nation*, has made a Ministry sometimes very wisely produce an Offender, give up One or more of their own Number, or redress some Grievance chiefly complain'd of, lest by not preventing such an Enquiry, they might run a Risque of being oblig'd to redress more Grievances than perhaps at first were thought of. A principal Point shall be yielded sometimes to avoid farther Trouble.

This has no relation to us at present. We all know how far our Great Men are from such Apprehensions; how little Reason a Ministry have to fear any Thing that might be trump'd up upon such an Enquiry. I'm satisfy'd *Gibraltar* is still in our Hands; and I am as well satisfy'd, notwithstanding the Expence of our Fleet, with so many thousands on board, there can be no danger of a War with the *Czar*, which indeed can never be of any Service to *England*.

As for what is past in the *Mediterranean*: If it has cost us Money, we have got Honour, by shewing how well we can fight upon the least Occasion. No, no, when those who are suspected of having had

Part

Part in the late traiterous Design, and the Gains of it, have acquitted themselves in that Point, to the Satisfaction of all honest Men, I'll venture to pronounce 'em innocent of a hundred other Miscarriages.

In this Reign of *Edward 2.* the Instance happen'd which the Parliament of *Richard 2.* referred to in their Message, as we have cited it above. The Story is this: *Hugh Spencer*, being made Lord Chamberlain, and a Man of equal Insolence and Ambition with *Gaveston*, so insinuated himself with the King, that he succeeded to all that Favourite's Authority, and also to the Hatred of the People. *Spencer* the Father was, for his Son's Sake, taken into Play, and made Earl of *Winchester*, as he himself was Earl of *Glocester*.

Upon which the Earls of *Lancaster* and *Hereford*, with many other Barons, assembled and swore mutually to live and die in Maintenance of the Rights of the Kingdom; and in procuring the Banishment of the *Spencers*, whom they held as the Seducers of the King, and Oppressors of the State, suffering nothing to be obtain'd but by their Means, which was a Mischief most intolerable to the State: "For that " when all Graces and Dispatches were to pass out " but at one Door, the King's Benignity was diminished, and Corruption was introduc'd, to the Overthrow of Justice and good Order." In short, these Lords procured the *Spencers* to be banish'd in Parliament. May all Ministers, who exercise the same Monopoly, meet with the same Fate.

However, as the King was rather forc'd to this, than convinc'd of his Duty in it, Means were found to elude the Effect of the Sentence, and *Spencer* the Son made shift to hide himself in *England*, with the

King's

King's Connivance, 'till a fair Occasion shou'd offer for his Return; which happen'd soon after, but to the utter Ruin of both; for the Queen being disgusted, as well as Lords and Commons, she order'd Matters so, as to get a sufficient Power; who declaring that their Design was only to deliver the Kingdom from evil Counsellors, they were easily successful. The Favourites were hang'd with the utmost Ignominy, and the unhappy King solemnly depos'd, as unfit to govern, for these Reasons among others: " For that " in all his Reign he had been misled, and govern'd " by others, who gave him evil Counsel, to the " Dishonour of himself and the Destruction of his " People, not considering or knowing whether it " was good or evil; nor wou'd remedy these things, " when he was Petition'd by the chief Men of his " Kingdom, nor suffer them to be redress'd." So wrong is it to trifle with a Parliament, who by their Misfortunes are become seriously in earnest.

A late Great Man of the same Name with those just mentioned, who was certainly a wise Man too, no sooner found he began to be peck'd at, with some Eargerness, by a House of Commons, but he came to the King and resigned his Staff, telling him he found he was not able to do him any Service in a publick Post: He did not expose his Master for his own private Interest, nor attempt to screen himself behind the Affection which the People might bear to the Person of the King. There ought to be no absenting for a little while, no laying down one Post and keeping others. When a Nation is exasperated, and a Minister is become heartily disagreeable, the only way for an honest Servant to express his Love to his Master, is to yield up all; and the most popular

Thing

Thing a Prince can do, is, to give up those that are  
disgutful to his People.

Thus did *Harry the Eighth*, than whom certainly  
there never was a more positive Prince. Because,  
says the Historian, the Authors of Oppression and  
Injustice are always most odious; and nothing gives  
a People more Satisfaction, than to see their Per-  
secutors punish'd: He caus'd *Empson* and *Dudley*,  
the two Chief Actors in the *late rapacious Proceed-  
ings*, to be committed to the *Tower*; and divers of  
the inferior Agents, call'd Aiders and Abettors, to  
be set in the *Pillory*: Soon after this he calls a  
Parliament, where the principal Proceedings were,  
with regard to *Empson's* and *Dudley's* Extortions:  
Upon which the King, that he might enlarge the  
People's Confidence and Affection towards him, was  
willing to restrain something of his own Authority.  
In short, *Empson* and *Dudley* were attainted of High  
Treason; and the King, to satisfy the importunate  
Clamours of his People, caus'd them both to be be-  
headed; by which he gain'd the Affection of the Na-  
tion, and was in perfect Peace and Safety with his  
People.

If a House of Commons cannot attack a Minister,  
or even a Ministry, upon a popular Grievance, but  
immediately the King and Ministry must be blended  
together; and they are wicked enough to try to cast  
the Odium upon him, or to screen themselves by him;  
there is an End of our Constitution. 'Tis indeed, a  
very true, and a very just Maxim with us, that *The  
King can do no Wrong*, but it ought to be carry'd  
no farther; we must not add *Nor his Ministry nei-  
ther*; for in that Case, none but the Tools of Mini-  
sters can ever be punish'd for the greater Abuses;  
which

which wou'd be a sad Case in the present Misery and Poverty we are reduc'd to.

Let us suppose that *Harry the Eighth* had tacitly encourag'd *Empson* and *Dudley* in plundering the Subjects, and had had no inconsiderable Share of the Gains himself, as it's certain *Harry the Seventh* had ; wou'd it or indeed ought it to have avail'd 'em any Thing, (when the Parliament were enquiring into their Actions) to have told the King, " Sir, You have had " your Share of this Booty ; they strike at you more " than at us ; you must screen us (happen what will) " or else more may come out than is proper to be " known." Cou'd any Thing have rais'd the Indigation of the Whole Nation against them more than this, if it was known ? And as for the Prince, he might well have answer'd 'em ; " I won't be accountable for this Mischief, by taking it upon my self ; " I was not let into the Secret ; I understood no harm " by it ; You ought to have advised me better ; but " since I now find that you only drew me in to hide " your own Avarice, depend upon it, I shall the more " willingly give you up to the just Resentment of " my People, and I am justified in it, both by the " Laws of God and my Kingdom.

Having made a few Remarks upon some Passages in our *English History* ; it may not be amiss to give some Instances of the good Oeconomy, and the steady and unbiass'd Virtue of the *Romans*, since it was by these and these alone, they became so great and powerful.

*Pyrrhus*, King of *Epirus*, was very desirous to conclude a *Peace* with the *Romans* ; in order to which, having got *Fabricius* alone, he tries in the following Speech to corrupt him.

" As I desire to have all the Rest of the *Romans* for  
D " my

“ my Friends, so especially you *C. Fabricius*, who I  
“ esteem as a Person that excels all others for your  
“ Conduct, as well in Civil as in Military Affairs;  
“ yet I am sorry to see you wanting in one Point,  
“ I mean of an Estate, that may enable you to  
“ live in that Port, which becomes a Person of  
“ your Quality. But I will not suffer this Inju-  
“ ry of Fortune to be any longer troublesome to  
“ you, and I will bestow on you so much Gold and  
“ Silver, as shall make you richer than any of  
“ your Fellow Citizens; for I reckon it becomes  
“ one in my Condition, to relieve such Great Men  
“ as are poor, who have always aim'd more at  
“ getting Honour than Money: Yet I would not  
“ not have made you this Offer, if the Honour of  
“ this Benefit accrued to me with Dishonour to  
“ your self; but now because you come not upon  
“ any perfidious Design, or that which is at all  
“ unworthy your Character, why should you re-  
“ fuse a small Present offered you, out of Kindness  
“ by a Friend; for I ask nothing of you, but what  
“ may, yea, and ought to be done by any honest  
“ Man, that is a Lover of his Country; That  
“ you'll endeavour to carry it for making Peace  
“ with me in the Senate, who have already gained  
“ a Battle, and bring them off from their Obstina-  
“ cy to a more moderate Temper.

*Fabricius* had too much Honesty to accept the Mo-  
ney, and too much good Sense not to know he  
could not long be of that Weight he was of, in  
his Country, if he had. After a short Pause, he  
made this Answer.

“ If I am observed to have any Skill in the Ma-  
“ nagement of Civil or Military Affairs, 'tis need-  
“ less

less for me to say any Thing of it, since you have  
 believ'd others so much concerning it. But if  
 you suppose I am in a worse Condition, because  
 I am poor, than any other *Roman*, you are migh-  
 tily mistaken; for whilst I do my Duty with  
 Contempt of Wealth, I feel no Misery: I bear  
 the greatest Offices among us; I manage the most  
 important Wars: I am employed in the most  
 honourable Embassies; the Charge of Religion  
 is committed to my Care; I am call'd to the Se-  
 nate, and consulted with concerning the weigh-  
 tiest Affairs of State; Therefore as much as be-  
 ing the poorest of all, I come not short of any  
 of the Wealthiest in what is good and commen-  
 dable, why shou'd I complain of my Fortune?  
 This as to my publick Capacity. In my private  
 one, my Poverty is so far from being a Burthen,  
 to me, that, on the contrary, when I compare my  
 self with your rich Men, my Condition seems  
 infinitely happier than theirs; and I count my  
 self one of those few, that have attained the grea-  
 test Happiness in this World: For since it seems  
 but an idle Thing to me to covet Superfluities, and  
 with all, my little Spot of Ground, which I la-  
 bour my self, if well cultivated, will supply me  
 with Necessaries, I do not know why I should be  
 solicitous for more Wealth: But if the Posse-  
 sion thereof renders a Man any Thing happier, as  
 to you Kings the Matter seems; which is the best  
 way of getting Wealth, to receive it from you  
 dishonourably, or to get it my self hereafter ho-  
 nournably? My good Successes in the Service of  
 the State, have given me brave Opportunities to  
 improve my Fortune, as at other Times often, so  
 especially

" especially four Years ago, when being Consul, I  
 " was sent with an Army against *Lucanians*, *Sam-*  
 " *nites*, and *Brutians*, and wasted their large Ter-  
 " ritories; and having routed them in several Bat-  
 " tles, took and rifled their rich Towns; from which  
 " Booty, after I had given Largeesses to my Soldiers,  
 " and repay'd private Persons, whatever they had  
 " lent the State, upon the Occasions of the War,  
 " there remained the Sum of 400 Talents, which  
 " I laid up in the publick Treasury. Seeing there-  
 " fore, that I have thus refus'd to make my Fortune  
 " by honourable Means, out of this Booty, which  
 " was in my Hands; and like *Val. Publicola*, and  
 " many other noble *Romans*, who have raised the  
 " State to this Pitch, preferred Honour before In-  
 " terest; shall I now take Bribes of you, quitting  
 " an honest Way of getting an Estate, for one as  
 " infamous as dangerous? But now what do you  
 " think would be the Issue of the Matter, if the  
 " Thing should be discovered (and it cannot be  
 " concealed) to those Magistrates, called *Censors*,  
 " from their Authority in reforming Manners,  
 " and that they shou'd impeach me of Bribery?

'Tis added by most, that *Pyrrhus* try'd his Con-  
 stancy and Resolution more importunately a second  
 Time: After other large Promises, offering to him part  
 of his Kingdom. All this I thought pertinent and  
 useful to mention, as related by several Authors,  
 to shew how the Greatness of the Romans took its  
 Rise, as well from the Thrift that was shewed in all  
 Matters relating to the Publick, (this wise Nation  
 making almost every foreign Expedition bear its  
 own Charge) as from the Integrity and Disinter-  
 estedness of their great Men and Ministers. These  
 were

were the Manners of those Days; such the Tempers and Dispositions of those Persons by whom the *Roman State*, being buoy'd up thro' so many Difficulties and Calamities, arrived at such an incomparable Grandeur of Empire and Renown. By these and the like Instances we may learn how Men ought to be qualified, if instead of being cry'd up by a few Creatures of their own, pensioned for that very Purpose, they intend to be heartily admired, cherished and belov'd by the Body of their Fellow-Citizens; and to leave their Posterity a more flourishing State, than they received from their Fore-fathers. Great Men did not then strive to exceed in Wealth and Luxury at their Country's Cost, but in Courage and Conduct, in Resolution and Fidelity to their Country: And these which I have cited, and the like, were no warm Expressions arising from Passion, nor premeditated by the Speakers, the more plausibly to carry on some secret Intrigue; but these Men being rather admirable than imitable in our Days, by the constant Tenor of their Actions, verified their Words.

This same *Fabricius*, when he had but two Pieces of Plate in his House, a Salt Seller and a Dish, with a Stand of Horn to hold it, and the Ambassadors of the *Samnites* wou'd have presented him with Money and rich Furniture, he told them, " As long as  
 " I can rule my Appetite, I shall want nothing;  
 " carry you the Money to them that want it." In fine, he liv'd so all his Life, that he left nothing at his Death, and his Daughters were portion'd by the Senate. The Chief Men liv'd then with the same Continence and Moderation.

I have been the longer upon this, because of the Usefulness of such Examples. The chief End of History being to give us good Rules, whereby we shou'd square our own Actions, and to point out to us the several Steps by which a Nation arrives at and preserves a strong, vigorous and flourishing Constitution, and becomes great and considerable with its Neighbours. Here we have a great Man behaving himself like a faithful Steward to the Commonwealth, accompting exactly for what Monies he had taken, and lodging them in the Publick Treasury. Here's a Statesman treating *All* the Offers and advantageous Conditions made him with Contempt, and refusing even a Share in a Crown; and that when the Thing desir'd of him seem'd rather of service than prejudicial to the Commonwealth; at least it was of such a Nature as might have bore the most plausible Colours, and the Author of it very easily have been screen'd: But an honest Man will always reason thus; Sure I need no such Inducements to promote the Good of my Country, and nothing shall tempt me to wrong it.

There is nothing more common among this brave People, than Examples of this sort; *Scipio*, *Cato*, *Uticensis*, *Flamininus*, and an hundred more, are Patterns for such to follow, as will handle Matters of Government with Integrity and Virtue. These did not think of building up Fortunes to themselves, but of enriching the State. They were so far from taking Presents to facilitate the passing of a Bill in the Senate, or appropriating to secret Services what was design'd to raise publick Credit, and pay the Nation's Debts; that like good Trustees they treasur'd up for the Services of the Publick

lick what they drew from others, and scorn'd to convert any part of it by little under-hand Subtilties and Distinctions to their own Use. Thus they took Care that Poverty shou'd not grow upon the Publick, as the only Means good Rulers have to prevent burthening the People with Taxes, a Matter with them ever studiously avoided.

If a good Prince neglects that which is so much his own Concern, and leaves a Matter so important to himself wholly to his Ministers; they will ever endeavour to keep him in Ignorance, that they may with the greater Impunity prey upon him: They grow corrupt and ravenous, the Commonwealth is devour'd, and nothing but Want and Misery ensues: And when he finds out his Fault, and sets himself seriously to disengage the Publick, and put the Revenue in Order, he is forc'd against his Inclination, to add heavy Burthens, and oppress the People with Taxes; and so he loses their Hearts, and they that Reverence they ought to have for him.

However, next to preventing so great an Evil, the safest Way, if it does happen, is, frankly to give up the Offenders; and make them answer for their Actions in that Place, to which the Constitution has entrusted the Enquiry into, and Punishment of such Offences. A Prince shou'd never suffer any thing that is Corrupt or Venal in his Palace. We have a very remarkable Instance of this in *Constantine*: An Instance never to be forgotten, either by a good King, or a free People. He, without staying for Addresses or Petitions, from the several Cities and Provinces of the Empire, proceeded of his own Accord, to remedy the Disorders crept into the Government by a rapacious Ministry. He thought it below him

to protect and screen a Minion or Favourite for any Reason whatsoever, but corrected Rapine, Oppression and Bribery, in the ministerial Parts of the Government, by a solemn EDICT, inviting all sorts of People, to accuse such of his Ministers and Officers as had been Corrupt.

I know, says a celebrated Author, many Obstacles will be thrown in the Way, to baffle such a Reformation. But a wise and resolute Prince, will easily surmount all Opposition. The Cabals of a Party, the Difficulties some Men pretend to bring upon his Affairs; no nor the vast Sums of Money, at first fraudulently gotten, and now laid out to prevent Enquiry: neither them nor a thousand other Obstacles, will ever terrifie or discourage such a one, bent to reform the State, who has the Love of his People, and whose Interest is one and the same with theirs. Much less need he apprehend the Mercenary and unconstant Crew of Place-Hunters, whose Designs are always seen thro', who are despis'd as soon as known, and who only lead one another. We have never yet heard of a Tumult rais'd to rescue a Minister, whom his Master desired to bring to a fair Account; on the contrary, to see a few enrich'd with the Spoils of a Country, has been the Occasion of many popular Seditions, which wise Kings have appeas'd, by a just and timely Sacrifice. To conclude, if a King be severe in looking into his Accounts, if he be careful of the publick Money, if he examine into the Corruption of his Officers, if he enquire into the sudden and exorbitant Wealth of those who have had the handling of his T R E A S U R E; if he rigorously punish such as, in breach of their Trust, and contrary to their Oaths, have converted to their own Use, what belongs to the State; if he abandon and resigns into the Hands of Justice such as have robbed him and the Publick; and if he take back what was too great to give, and much too great to be ask'd; 'tis with the universal Applause of the People, whom this Care relieves from frequent and heavy Taxes; he will be justify'd by the Voices of all Mankind, in pursuing the Ends for which he was Call'd by the People, and his Name will be Great to all future Generations.

“ Nemo est tam stultus qui non intelligat, si dormierimus  
hoc tempore, non modo crudellem & superbam Domina-  
tionem nobis sed & ignominiosam & flagitiosam esse ferent-  
dam

F I N I S.

